Rashomon Syndrome

Phillis was over fifty. Her hair was grey and she had gained a lot of weight since high school. She was tired. Not just of her day, but of all the crap she had to deal with in her life.

Her divorce, her black sheep father, her lack of success. And now this. She wondered why she deserved this.

Hello. My name is Agent Barton. You can call me Kurt.

What is this?

That's what I would like to know, you are the one who dialed 9-1-1 correct?

Yeahmpff...

Can you tell me what happened?

Why should I?

I am asking politely

This will be confidential, right?

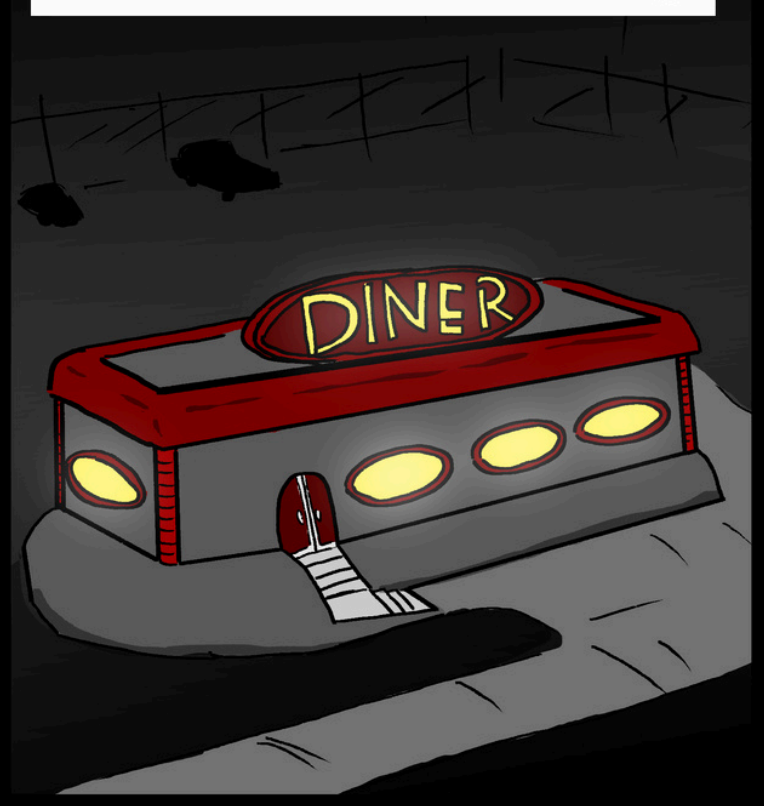
Absolutely.

Can I have a cigarette?

We thought you'd ask,

Start from the beginning.

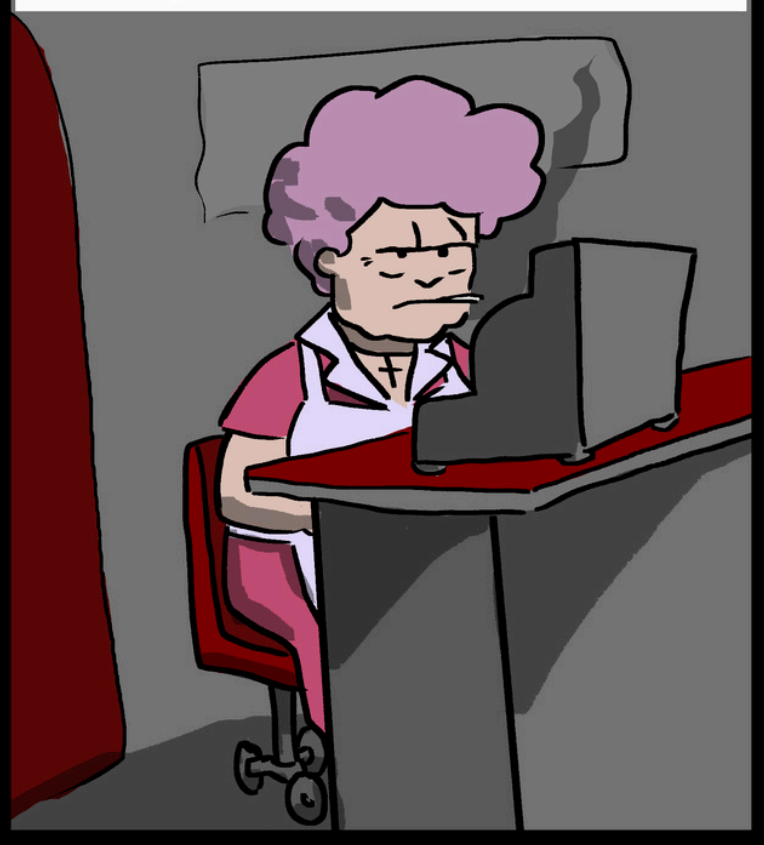
Well, it was late. Like 12 or 1 in the morning.



I was working at my diner. I had just served some young lady some coffee.

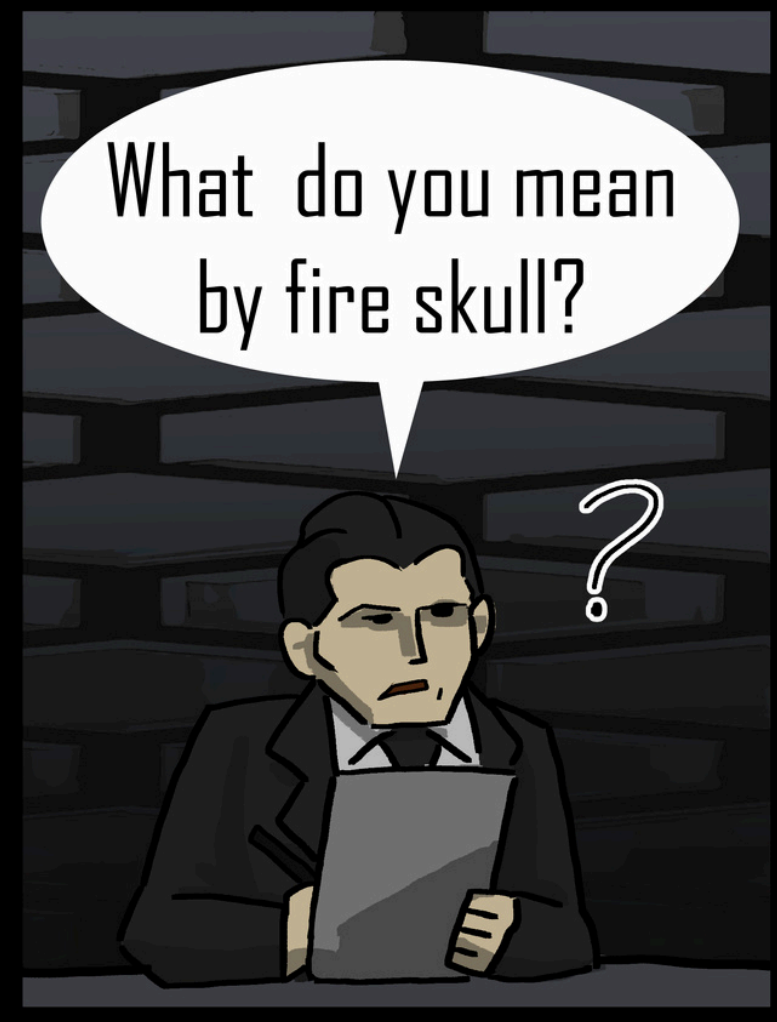
I don't know why she was drinking coffee so late but whatever.

I was sitting next to the cash register. Minding my own business. Y'know, doing whatever, doesn't matter.



When, this fire skull bursts through the wall!

What do you mean by fire skull?



Like a skull, but with fire.

Very well, Continue.

So Fire Skull pushed his head through my wall.

And I remember yelling "What the fuck!"

What the fuck!

He pulled his head out of the wall and then his friend, which was a big red bat thing, came through the window.

SMASH!

The Fire Skull jumped through the window too. His body was all black, like actually black. Like ptich.

These two creatures started playing catch with fire balls. But they weren't any good at playing catch. Most of the fire balls just hit th[illegible]airs and tables of my diner. Setting most of everythin[illegible]fire.

I could swear they were taunting me.

Bàm! Crash Crack Bang

They did that for a little bit and then ran into the kitchen. Started destroying the place.

At this point I managed to dial the police on a landline phone under the counter.

I told them what was happening and they said they would send some officers right away.

That customer, the one that was drinking coffee, went over to check on what was happening in the kitchen. I don't know why. Maybe she had a death wish, or maybe she was working with them. I don't know.

The Fire Skull walked out of the kitchen after all the noise died down

He left using the front door, I don't know why he didn't use it to enter.

When I checked the kitchen myself, it was almost completely destroyed. There was a burnt line across the entire room. Dishes and tables were turned over. Some knives were in the walls.

Then the police came and they brought me here.

Do you know what they were?

What do I think what were?

The Fire Skull. The big red bat. Any idea what they could have been? Hallucinations? People in costumes?

I'm a Catholic woman. I know what they were.

They were monsters. More specifically, Monsters from hell.

Out to get me. Out to warn me where I'm headed.

What makes you so sure?

Lets just say my dad used my diner as his front. I need to watch my back or else I will pay the price he should pay

Alright. Thank you. You have been very helpful.

How do I get outta here?

Twelve hours now. Or at least it felt like that. She would've passed out from exhaustion but her mind was still meticulously going over the craziness that ended her day. Was it all real?

Hello, My name is Agent Barton, but you can call me Kurt.

Is this S.H.E.I.L.D.?

No. I need you to tell me what happened.

I just, how do I know you'll believe it?

You live in a world where aliens attack New York through portals. I can believe whatever you tell me.

I was sipping coffee at this Diner. The one right next to the highway bridge.

I was sitting on one end of the Diner just resting after my long day. It was very late and I needed some form of rest so I ordered some tea.

On the other side of the diner the waitress was standing by the cashier register.

I hear this crushing sound behind me and the waitress screams.

CRUSH

AAAH!

It startled me so much I almost spilled a little bit of tea.

I turned around to find a hole in the wall of the diner. And then it happened.

Then this thing... this creature... burst through the window!

It was big and red, but immaciated. It had big bat-ish wings and horns. It's face was horse-ish but it had fangs. I also remember yellow eyes.

After that creature this burning man jumped through the window.

I mean his entire head was on fire. He was big, not a giant or anything but bigger than a football player. And I wanna say he was wearing a stunutman's uniform. Like what Evel Knievel wore.

I sort of froze at this moment. I just could not comprehend what was happening

The burning man started throwing balls of fire at the creature.

Most of which he missed but that horse monster was a fast one.

I tried to record what was happening with my phone.

But the creature, the bat horse, whatever it was, wouldn't show up on my phone.

Either way even if I did film the thing, one fireball, Which I think was thrown be the creature hit my phone, destroying it.

Like it was invisible, but it wasn't invisible, I could see it, just not my phone.

Smack

Pow

Thud

Whap

These two things went into the kitchen. I don't know exactly know what went down. But they made a lot of noise and racket.

I guess my curiosity got the best of me, killed the cat as they say, and I approached the doors of the kitchen to see what was happening.

Before I could even open the door myself, that red thing jumped out of the doors. I think it wanted to kill me.

But the burning man pulled it back somehow. He used a whip or something.

I saw him turn it to ash... like a magic trick.

He then walked right by me as he walked out.

I fell to the floor and curled up in shock.

I don't even remember how I got where I am now. Did the authorities bring me here? Am I in trouble?

Yes, and No. You're not in trouble. We just needed to know what happened.

Do you believe me?

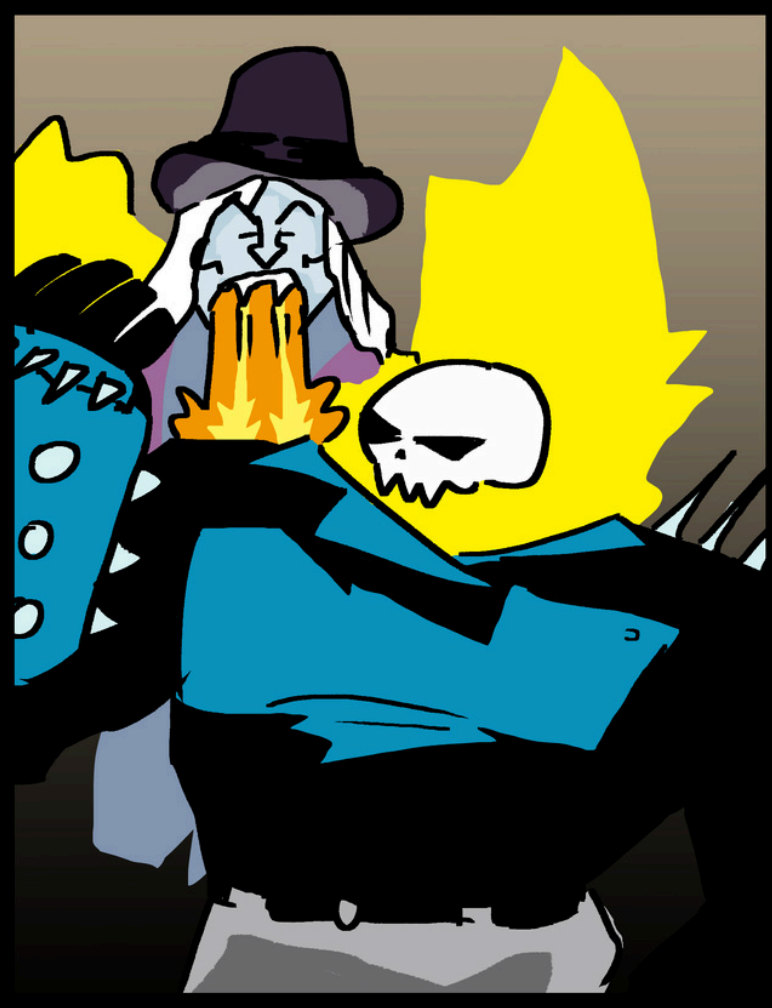
Of course. You gave us everything we needed to know. What do you think it was? The burning man.

He saved my life from that red thing. I guess I think he's a hero.

Wait! If you're not with S.H.E.I.L.D., then what are you?

Oh, We're A.R.M.O.R.

I've been The Ghost Rider now for 5 years now. 5 years of bursting into a flaming skeleton and beating the crap out of every guilty thug out there. It's a curse. But at this point there's no hope in stopping the spirit of vengeance that's taken over me. It's like a drug. As much as I would much prefer to stop and live a normal life, I can't resist it. To be filled with so much flaming strength and speed. No matter how violent I get I know my hellfire is being bestowed on someone who deserves it. Deathwatch, Blackout, Zodiac... I might have burned them alive, but they were thieves, killers, and worse. They deserved it. That's what I tell myself. They deserved it. I've fought everything in my days of vigilantism. Everything from vampires to bank robbers. And today I'm going through the motions.



There's a demon in the sky. Came all the way here from Hell

Not actually Hell. Another dimension full of fire and brimstone, might as well be Hell.

I can't even remember when I started chasing it. It can't get far away from me when I'm on my Hellcycle. Nothings faster than a motorbike with flaming wheels. But that damn son of a bitch is just out of my reach.

I've had to follow it out of the desert and into the city.

And that's when that bugger flew down to the ground.

On my left was a Diner. On my right was some old houses. Probably abandoned.

As The Ghost Rider I could sense the sinners in this part of town. I don't know what exactly it may be gang members, it might be drug dealers, but I could sense the sinners in the area. I can't focus on that.

Where was that dama demon? His red, horned head had to be around here somewhere.

Skree!

This was also the day I learned what it was like to have my head forced through a brick wall.

SMASH!

SMASH!

I hopped through the broken window.

I hopped through the broken window. I started summoning fireballs and throwing them at the winged red beast. This piece of crap is a fast little shit. Most of my fireballs just hit the walls of the diner. The only times I hit the demon were when he used his wings as reflective shields. My fireballs bounced off his wings and back in my direction.

This demon is starting to become more annoying than dangerous.

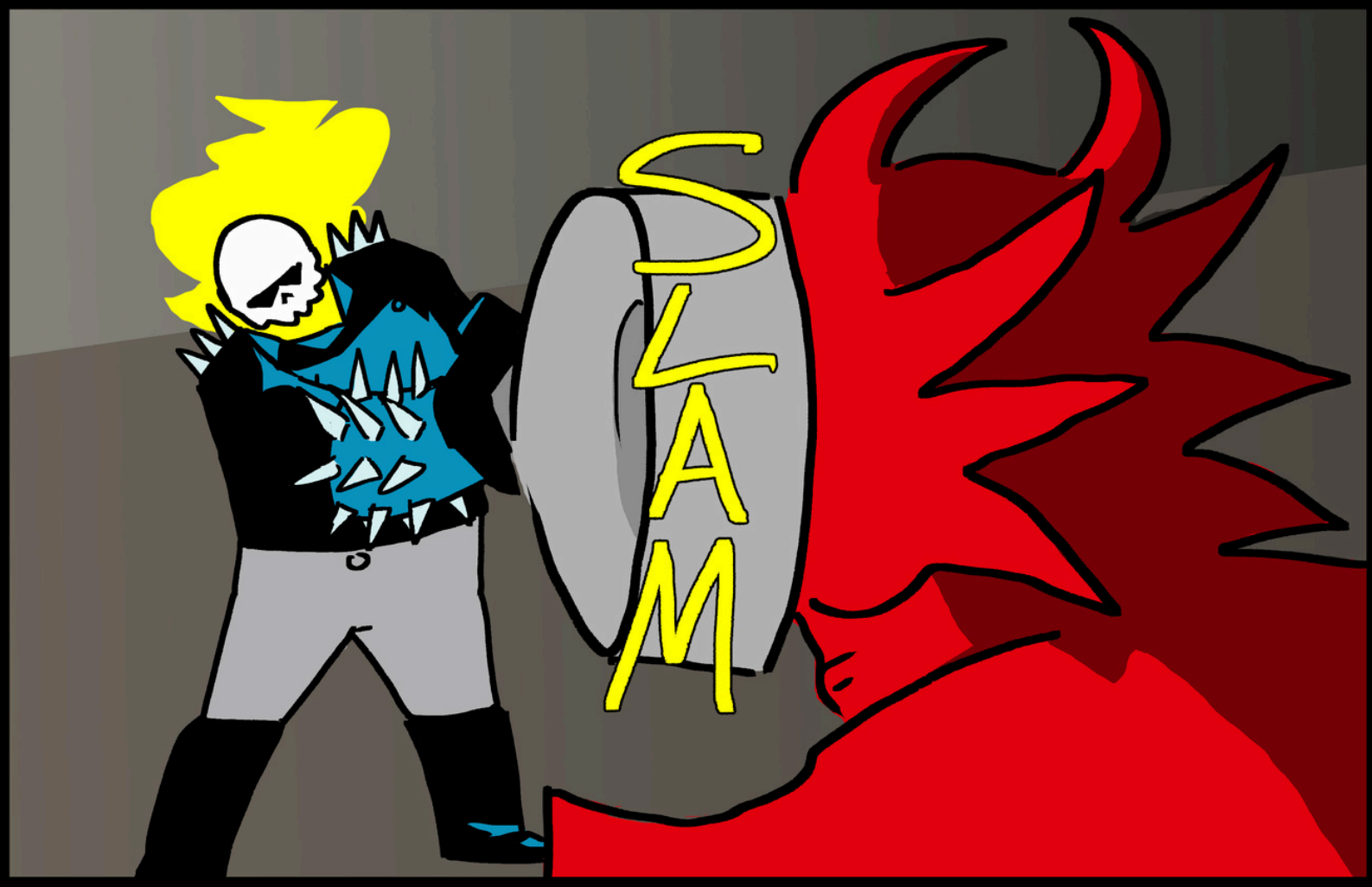
The demon scampers into the kitchen of the diner. I, of course, followed.

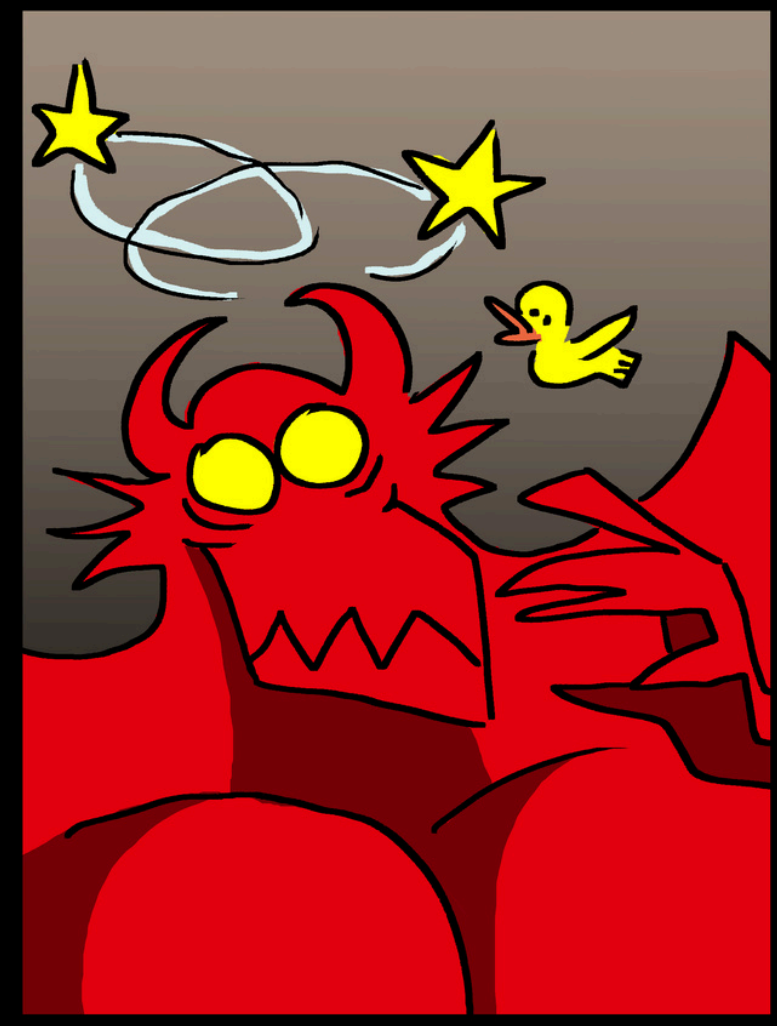
When I entered I was greeted by a kitchen knife passing by my face at a great speed.

The demon was throwing every kitchen appliance at me.

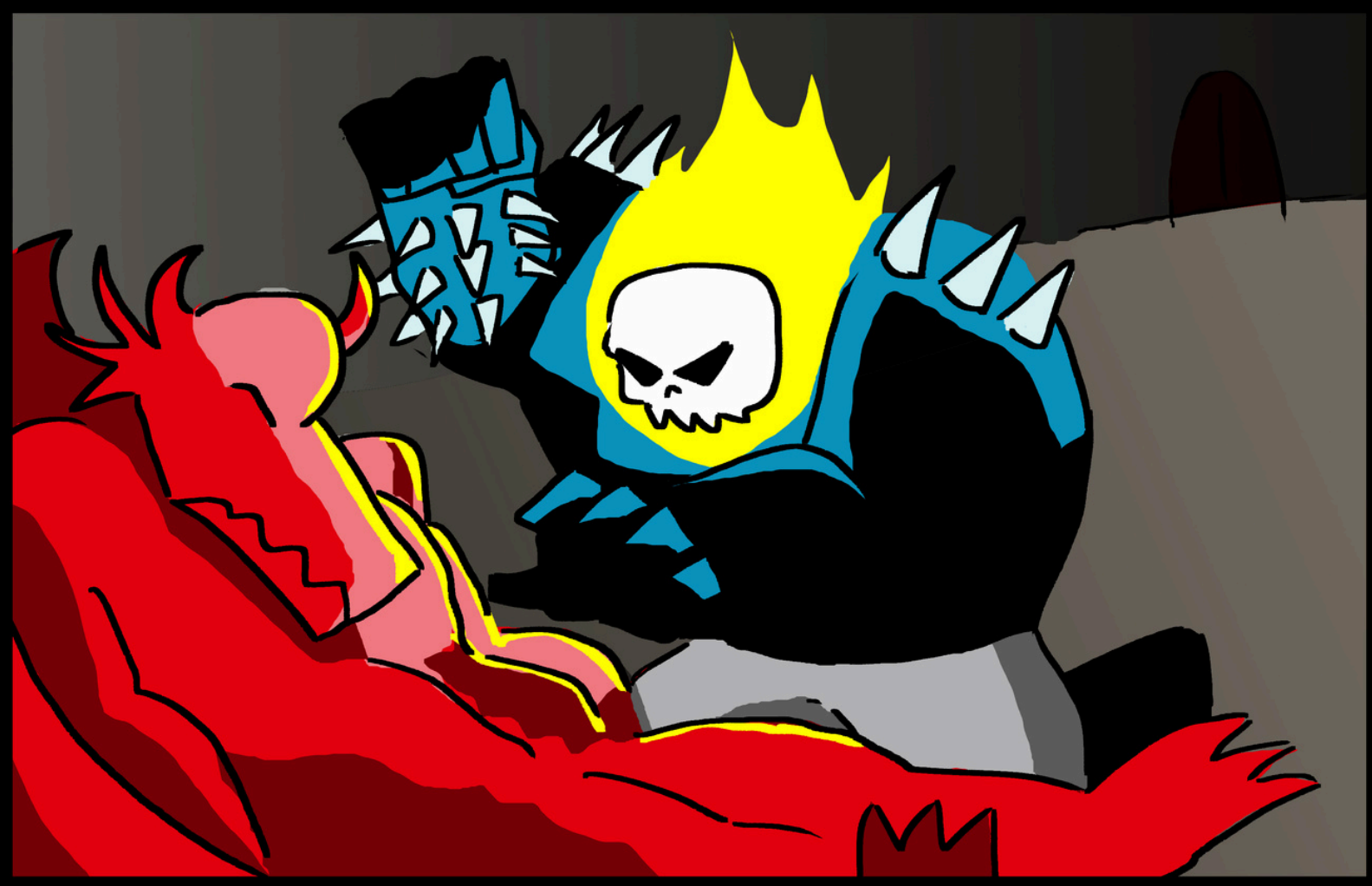
he even picked up a blender and smashed it at my feet.

SMASH


SLAM



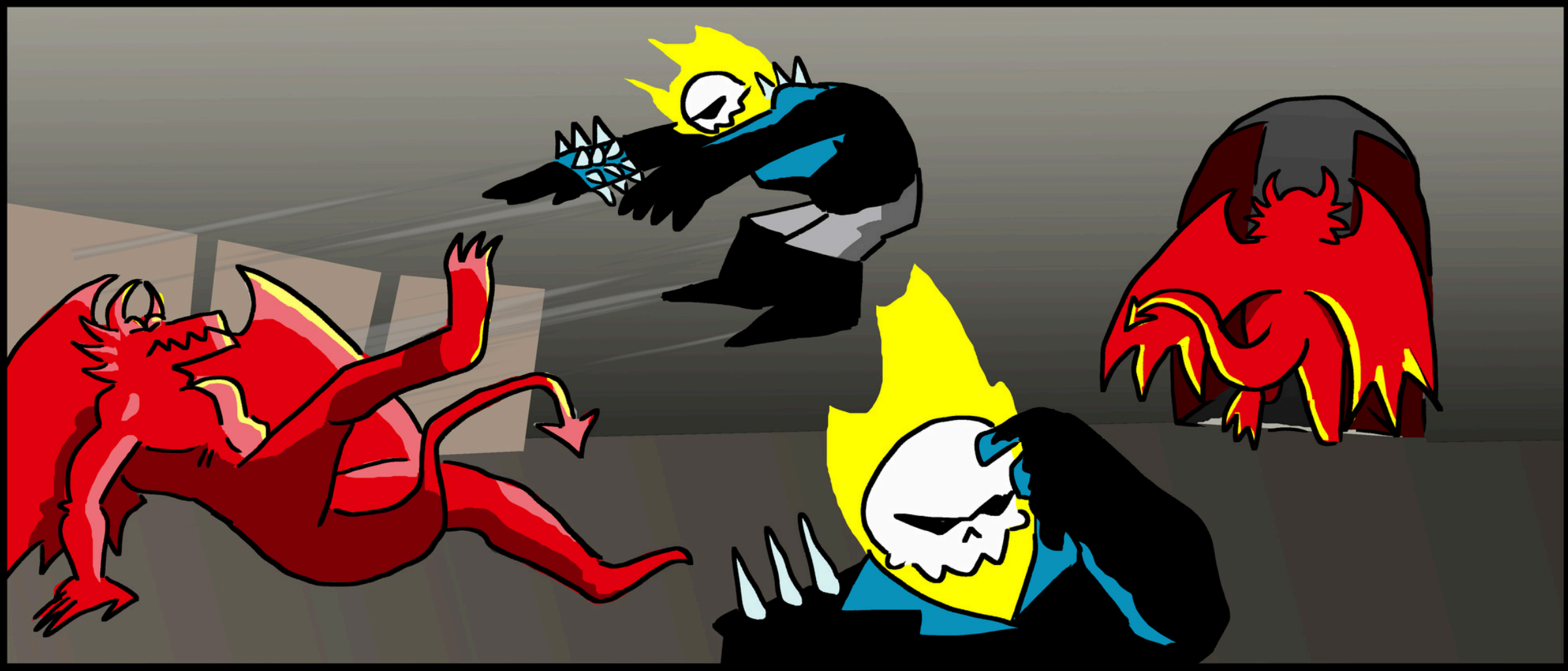
THUMP



Punch

Pow

Crack



EE
AA HAH

I started to walk out the door of the diner. Before I left I caught a glimpse of my reflection in the mirror.

Empty black eyes, a skull whiter like cocaine, and fire hotter than hell.

What am I. Am I a monster, a hero. I don't care, whatever I am, I'm not human. I'm just addicted. I walked out the diner and whistled for my hellcycle.